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**CLAIMS:**

What is claimed is:

1. A method for service processor surveillance,  
comprising:
  - 5 receiving a service processor status request from a  
first partition;  
performing a surveillance test for the service  
processor if the time period has elapsed;  
updating an official response for the surveillance  
10 test; and  
returning a status for the service processor to the  
partition.
  2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of  
performing the surveillance test comprises:
    - 15 reading surveillance information; and  
determining whether the service processor has  
written to the surveillance information.
    3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of  
performing the surveillance test further comprises  
20 writing to the surveillance information.
    4. The method of claim 2, wherein the surveillance  
information comprises a surveillance byte in nonvolatile  
random access memory.
    5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
      - 25 performing error handling if the service processor  
is in error.

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6. The method of claim 1, wherein the status comprises the official response.

comparing the official response to a partition

setting the partition official response to be equal to the official response if the official response is not equal to the partition official response.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein the status comprises a neutral value if the official response is equal to the partition official response.

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        receiving a service processor status request from a
first partition;

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performing a surveillance test for the service processor if the time period has elapsed; and

25 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the step of  
performing the surveillance test comprises:

reading surveillance information; and

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determining whether the service processor has written to the surveillance information.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of performing the surveillance test further comprises  
5 writing to the surveillance information.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the surveillance information comprises a surveillance byte in nonvolatile random access memory.

14. An apparatus for service processor surveillance,  
10 comprising:

receipt means for receiving a service processor status request from a first partition;

surveillance means for performing a surveillance test for the service processor if the time period has  
15 elapsed;

update means for updating an official response for the surveillance test; and

return means for returning a status for the service processor to the partition.

20 15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the surveillance means comprises:

reading means for reading surveillance information;  
and

determination means for determining whether the  
25 service processor has written to the surveillance information.

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16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the surveillance means further comprises means for writing to the surveillance information.

17. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the surveillance information comprises a surveillance byte in nonvolatile random access memory.

18. The apparatus of claim 14, further comprising:  
means for performing error handling if the service processor is in error.

10 19. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the status comprises the official response.

20. The apparatus of claim 14, further comprising:  
means for comparing the official response to a partition official response associated with the first partition; and  
15 means for setting the partition official response to be equal to the official response if the official response is not equal to the partition official response.

21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the status  
20 comprises the partition official response.

22. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the status comprises a neutral value if the official response is equal to the partition official response.

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23. An apparatus for service processor surveillance, comprising:

receipt means for receiving a service processor status request from a first partition;

5 determination means for determining whether a predetermined time period has elapsed;

surveillance means for performing a surveillance test for the service processor if the time period has elapsed; and

10 return means for returning a status for the service processor to the partition.

24. The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the surveillance means comprises:

reading means for reading surveillance information;

15 and

determination means for determining whether the service processor has written to the surveillance information.

25. The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the surveillance  
20 means further comprises means for writing to the surveillance information.

26. The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the surveillance information comprises a surveillance byte in nonvolatile random access memory.

25 27. A computer program product, in a computer readable medium, for service processor surveillance, comprising:

instructions for receiving a service processor status request from a first partition;

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instructions for performing a surveillance test for the service processor if the time period has elapsed;

instructions for updating an official response for the surveillance test; and

- 5 instructions for returning a status for the service processor to the partition.

28. A computer program product, in a computer readable medium, for service processor surveillance, comprising:

- instructions for receiving a service processor  
10 status request from a first partition;  
instructions for determining whether a predetermined time period has elapsed;  
instructions for performing a surveillance test for the service processor if the time period has elapsed; and  
15 instructions for returning a status for the service processor to the partition.

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